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OUR TOWN
HOW WE BEGAN
HOW WE ARE GOVERNED

BRYN MAWR
and
LOWER MERION TOWNSHIP

Ardmore, Bala, Bryn Mawr, Cynwyd, Gladwyne
Merion, Narberth (Borough).



MR. JOSEPH O. KERBAUGH
Chairman, Township Commissioners

OUR TOWN, HOW WE BEGAN HOW WE ARE GOVERNED

BRYN MAWR
AND
LOWER MERION TOWNSHIP

BY
RUTH HIBBARD, A. B.

under the

Carola Woerishoffer Graduate Department of Social Economy
of Bryn Mawr College

in co-operation with

The Bryn Mawr Community Center

1920

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OFFICERS OF LOWER MERION TOWNSHIP

- 3 Justices of the Peace (6 years)—Hervey C. Irwin, Richard T. Lewis (1925), H. S. Stillwagon (1923).
- 2 Constables (4 years)—Robert J. Lindsay, Michael McDonough (1923).
- 1 Real Estate Assessor (4 years)—Albert Lee (1923).
- 1 Assistant Real Estate Assessor (4 years)—Storm Z. W. Patterson (1923).
- 2 Assistant Triennial Assessors (4 years)—H. M. McClure, W. Gordon Smith (1923).
- 13 Registry Assessors (4 years)—(1)* William B. Titlow, (2) Orion E. Klein, (3) Charles McMoran, (4) David M. Ramsey, (5) James G. Newman, (6) Frank H. Lewis, (7) Terrence Connell, (8) Isaac Chambers, (9) E. Grant Mercer, (10) Michael McDonough, (11) Walter B. Sharp, (12) Dwight D. Willard, (13) James E. Dolan (1921).
- 13 Township Commissioners (4 years)—*(1) James A. Stretch, (3) W. H. Moran, (5) Benj. H. Ludlow, (7) John Lewis Evans, (9) Martin P. Glynn, (11) Joseph O. Kerbaugh, (13) Joseph J. Skelton—1923. (2) W. A. L. Barker, (4) Kane S. Green, (6) J. Howard Supplee, (8) William Frankenfield, (10) W. H. Sherwood, (12) Henry Delaplaine—1921.

*The number indicates the district of the Township which each person represents. See Map.

7 School Directors (6 years)—William J. Clark, J. Harmon Wilson (1921), William C. Powell, William J. Byrnes, Jr., Richard J. Hamilton, (1923), William L. Austin, Thomas C. Yocum (1925).

3 Auditors (4 years)—Audrey C. Dulltme (1921), Edmund N. Crossman (1923), Vacancy.

Treasurer (4 years)—George Gane (1921).

13 Judges of Elections (2 years)—(1) William G. Nelson, (2) Charles R. Smith, (3) Arthur Flowers, (4) F. Howard Shank, (5) William F. North, (6) C. Ernest Shank, (7) F. D. A. Cabeen, (8) Lewis R. Winter, Jr., (9) Frederick T. Moore, (10) Andrew Zassallo, (11) Arnold F. Gardner, (12) William J. Conlen, (13) Harry A. Ferreira (1921).

26 Inspectors of Elections* (2 years)—(1) William L. Horning, George L. Hansel, (2) John Bolte, Louise S. Boyer, (3) Henry Angstadt, C. Edward Lentz, (4) W. J. Litzenberg, Henry W. Shire, (5) Henry W. Brown, Henry Brown, (6) Ernest H. Nicholson, John F. Casey, (7) Charles N. Agnew, (No minority), (8) Casper Bongilcoanni, Martin Costello, (9) William E. Clear, G. L. Smith, (10) W. W. Chambers, W. Kane, (11) E. W. Brown, John J. Doyle, (12) Archibald Ehle, (No minority), (13) Edward R. Jordan, John Haynes (1921).

*Majority Inspector given first, minority second.

THE ELECTOR'S CALENDAR.

1919—November 4th—Election of seven Township Commissioners (for odd numbered districts); two members of the Board of Education, two Justices of the Peace, two Constables, one Real Estate Assessor, one Assistant Real Estate Assessor, two Assistant Triennial Assessors, one Auditor, thirteen Judges of Elections, and twenty-six Inspectors of Elections.

1921—November 8th—Election of six Township Commissioners (for even numbered districts); two members of the Board of Education, thirteen Registry Assessors, one Auditor, thirteen Judges of Elections and twenty-six Inspectors of Elections.

1923—November 3rd—Election of seven Township Commissioners (for odd numbered districts); three members of the Board of Education, one Justice of the Peace, two Constables, one Real Estate Assessor, one Assistant Real Estate Assessor, two Triennial Assessors and one Auditor.

1925—November 6th—Election of six Township Commissioners, two School Directors, two Justices of the Peace, thirteen Registry Assessors, one Auditor, thirteen Judges of Elections and twenty-six Inspectors of Elections.

PREFACE.

This account of the early history and of the government of Lower Merion Township was written for our present citizens, and our future citizens, the boys and girls of our community. Do we all know who are our chief executives and what is their term of office? Do we know for what we hold them responsible, and how they are repaid for their services to our town? Do we know where our elections are held, what are the boundaries of our election districts, which is our voting precinct and where our voting booth is? What officials have charge of all our school property, and are responsible for the selection of our school teachers and of the books our children study? Who takes care that we have a pure water supply, and that the milk dealers sell only pure milk? Whose business it is to make and enforce regulations to keep the standard of public health at a high level? Is not all such information essential if we are to vote intelligently, if we are to have a clean town, the best of schools, and strong and healthy citizens? It is to answer these questions that this pamphlet has been prepared.

The historical sketch is based upon **MERION IN THE WELSH TRACT**, by Thomas Allen Glenn, and **THE WELSH SETTLEMENT**, by

Charles H. Browning. To both of these works the writer refers all readers who may be interested to know more about the beginnings of our town. To Miss Frances Buffum, a student of Bryn Mawr College, who secured the material used in the account of the public health service, to the class in Social Betterment and to the Seminary in Municipal Government of Bryn Mawr College, the author is indebted for assistance. The following list of the books and pamphlets to which reference is made will supply full information about the history and government of Lower Merion Township:

BROWNING, CHARLES H.

Welsh Settlement of Pennsylvania. William J. Campbell, Philadelphia, 1912.

GLENN, THOMAS A.

Merion in the Welsh Tract. Norristown, 1896.

SHARPLESS, ISAAC.

Quakerism and Politics. Ferris & Leach, Philadelphia, 1905.

MALTBY, ALBERT E.

Elementary Civics for Pennsylvania. American Book Company, 1915.

BONSALL, WARD.

Handbook of Social Laws of Pennsylvania. Published by Philadelphia Society for Organizing Charity, 1914.

Compilation of the General Laws Relating to Townships. Legislative Reference Bureau, Harrisburg, 1916.

School Laws of Pennsylvania. School Code and Other Laws Relating to the Public Schools, Harrisburg, 1915.

SCHAEFFER, NATHAN C.

Regulations of the Board of Health of Lower Merion Township, 1915.

By-Laws of Lower Merion Commission, 1911.

Directory of Lower Merion Public Schools, 1917-1918.

Twenty-fourth Annual Report of the Bryn Mawr Hospital, July, 1917.

RUTH HIBBARD.

Bryn Mawr, March, 1920.

OUR TOWN
HOW WE BEGAN
HOW WE ARE GOVERNED

BRYN MAWR
and
LOWER MERION TOWNSHIP

Merion Township, originally called the Town of Merioneth, was settled by some Welsh families who left their homes in Wales because of persecution for their Quaker beliefs. Dr. Edward Jones, Edward Reese and others, some forty in all, from Merionethshire, in Wales, after a voyage of eleven weeks, arrived in Philadelphia in August, 1682, to settle upon a tract of about five thousand acres of land which had been granted to Edward Jones and John Thomas by William Penn in London for the sum of £100. Of the journey Dr. Edward Jones wrote to John Thomas, who was unable to join the party, "We have been aboard eleven weeks before we made the land, and in all this time we wanted neither meate, drink or water. . . . A great many could eat little or no beefe, though it was good. Butter and cheese eats well upon ye sea. . . . The passengers are all

living, save one child, yt died of a surfeit. Let no friends tell that they are either too old or too young, (to come over) for the Lord is sufficient to preserve both to the uttermost. Here is an old man about 80 years of age; he is rather better yn when he sett out. Likewise here are young babes doing very well considering the sea diet."

Of their tract of land he writes, "I hope it will please thee, . . . for it hath most rare timber. I have not seen the like in all these parts. There is water enough besides."¹

Other Welsh companies came over in the next few years and settled upon land now occupied chiefly by the townships of Lower Merion, Radnor and Haverford, about forty thousand acres in all, known for more than a century as the Great Welsh Tract. These colonists hoped to have a separate government of their own in this new country, and to make laws and maintain courts of justice for themselves. But gradually colonists who were not Welsh took up vacant sections of the tract and the dream of the "Welsh Barony" of Pennsylvania was never realized. At the time of settlement, this region was considered the far wilderness by the residents of Philadelphia, but the Welsh were attracted to it because there were many streams and abundant woodlands and fertile soil, and the rolling country reminded them of their old home.

With great energy and persistence, in the face of

¹Quoted in "Welsh Settlement of Pennsy/vania," by Charles H. Browning, pp. 65, 66, 67.

many difficulties from lack of tools and necessary materials, and from the opposition of envious but less industrious neighbors, they built excellent roads, established a ferry over the Schuylkill, built mills and houses for themselves and meeting houses, and cultivated the land till the settlement became by far the finest in this part of Pennsylvania. A writer in 1708 referring to this Welsh tract said in a letter, "'Tis very populous, and the people are very industrious, by which means this country is better cleared than any other part of the country. The inhabitants have many fine plantations; they are looked upon to be as thriving and wealthy as any in the provinces."¹

At first the settlers were not allowed to construct mills for themselves, but were obliged to carry their grain to William Penn's official grist mill. Later, however, there were grist and sawmills in Haverford, one on Cobb Creek as early as 1688, and the other on Darby Creek, built in 1703. Cobb Creek is said to have gotten its name from William Cobb whom Penn established over one of his mills as official miller. With some of their roads we are familiar. The old Gulph Road, now called Roberts Road, was in use as early as 1690. The old Lancaster Road was planned in 1683, and the old Haverford Road dates back to 1704. These roads were marked by mile stones set up by the Surveyor General and bearing the Penn arms.

¹Quoted in Browning's "Welsh Settlement of Pennsylvania," p. 318.



Ancient Mile-stone. with Penn's Arms, on the Old Gulph Road,
North of Bryn Mawr.

(Courtesy of H. Parker Rolfe, Photographer)

One of these still stands on the old Gulph Road just northeast of Bryn Mawr College. The earliest boundary line stone in the neighborhood of Bryn Mawr is on Haverford College land north of Cobb Creek and bears the date 1683.

At a time when many people could not write even their own names, most of these Welsh settlers were men of excellent education, and in order to educate their children they secured able teachers from Wales. Nearly every family had a library and the meetings of Merion, Radnor and Haverford united in maintaining a circulating library as early as the end of the seventeenth century.

Among the early settlers of that part of Lower Merion Township, where Bryn Mawr now stands, was Rowland Ellis, who came to this country in 1697 and settled upon a six hundred acre plantation which he called "Bryn Mawr," after his old home in Wales. This estate was afterward sold to Richard Harrison and was by him called "Harriton." It is the property directly east and north of Bryn Mawr College and is of interest to the students of the history of Bryn Mawr because of an ancient burial ground situated on the estate. The land upon which the present Bryn Mawr stands was originally part of a grant which William Penn made in 1684 to one Edward Prichard. It joined the lands belonging to Rowland Ellis and John Humphreys, of Haverford. About two hundred acres of this tract came into the possession of Benjamin Humphreys, who lived at his home near the

Bryn Mawr College grounds until 1738. Bryn Mawr was first called Humphreysville from the Humphreys family. It is mentioned in the State Gazette as early as 1832 as a village on the Pike, but it was not plotted out until 1868-9. It had no post office before 1830. It is said to have had twenty-one houses in 1858.

The railroad built through this section helped the growth of the villages along the Main Line. The first railroad in the State of Pennsylvania, the Columbia Railway, was opened in 1832 and extended from Philadelphia to Paoli. The passengers were ferried over the river to Callowhill Street. From there the cars were dragged along the rails to Paoli by horses. Later steam engines were used. The road was built of iron rails "laid in iron chairs, bolted to sills of stone." It ran through Fairmount Park, Athensville (now Ardmore), between Founders' Hall of Haverford College and the present Meeting House, to Whitehall in Bryn Mawr, then on to Paoli. In 1850 the Columbia Road was taken over by the Pennsylvania Railroad. A guidebook published in 1860 says that Whitehall, 10 miles from Philadelphia, was the first regular station on the railroad, and that West Haverford, where is now "Ye Olde Store" at Rosemont, was a flag station.¹

A poster of this first railroad, dated 1837, advertises it as the "Pioneer Fast Line," and states that one can go by railroad and canal packet from Philadelphia

¹Browning, pp. 476-480.

to Pittsburgh in 3½ days and that "for speed and comfort" the line is "not excelled by any other in the United States."¹

If you look at the map of Lower Merion Township you will see a jog on the southwestern edge which the county line makes between Lower Merion and Haverford Townships. A long time ago when the three townships of Lower Merion, Haverford and Radnor were all in Philadelphia county, a petition was brought by Montgomery county to the Deputy Governor who was serving in William Penn's absence, asking that some of the Welsh settlements be transferred to that county, because it was sparsely settled.

It wanted the number of the inhabitants to be increased so that the county funds might be more easily raised. At that time the Welsh had strong political influence, and were opposed to certain interests advanced by Governor Blackwell. Moreover, the Welsh were very independent and were hoping, even then, to set up a little separate government of their own within the province of Pennsylvania. Governor Blackwell may have thought it would lessen their power if they were divided. At any rate, in spite of their protests, the county line was made to run directly across this Great Welsh Tract, so that ever since then, Radnor and Haverford have been in Delaware county and Lower Merion in Montgomery county.²

Our township is six and one-half miles long and

¹Ibid., p. 478.

²Sharpless, "Quakerism and Politics," p. 151.

four miles wide. It has an area of more than fourteen thousand acres. It extends to West Conshohocken Borough on the West, to Philadelphia County on the East, to Upper Merion Township on the North and to Haverford and Radnor Townships on the South and West. There are more than 17,000 people living in this township, a population greater than that of any other township in Montgomery County. It has more than twice as many inhabitants as Radnor Township, and four times as many as Haverford.

With so many people going back and forth over its highways and bridges the township must see that they are kept safe for travel, and so the voters elect men to do this. These men are called the township commissioners and they are our chief executive officers. Since the township contains a population of more than three hundred persons to the square mile, it is by the State law a township of the first class.¹ Such a township may elect five commissioners for 5000 inhabitants and an additional commissioner for each 2000 over.

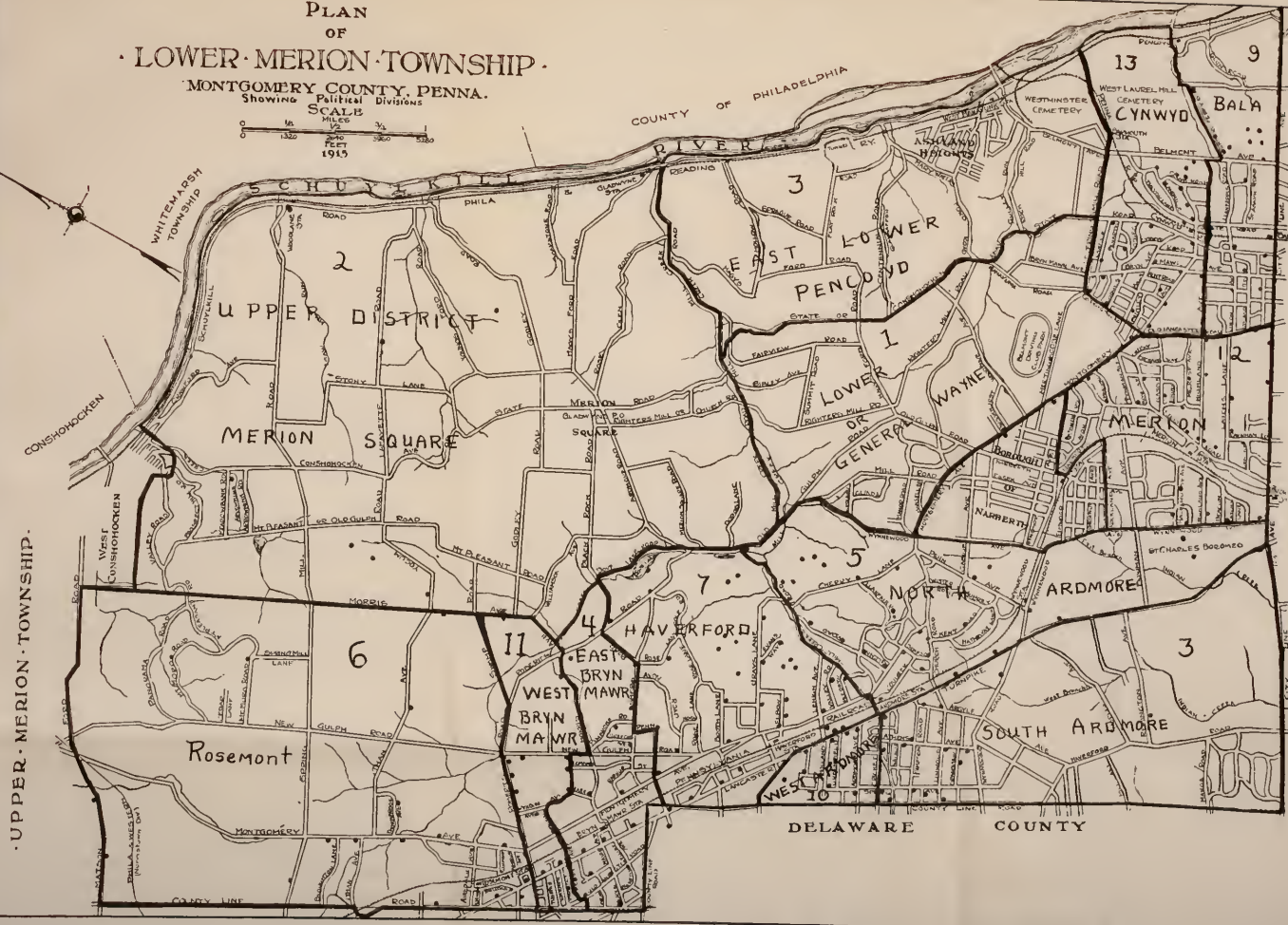
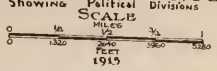
Lower Merion Township has thirteen commissioners.¹ These officials have the care of highways which are already built and may have new roads surveyed and constructed. They have charge also of the construction and repair of the township's drainage system. They may establish lights along the highways and provide means for fire protection. By a State law they may levy an annual tax of not

¹Laws of Pennsylvania, 1907, p. 305, Art. 230.

²Maltby, p. 64.

PLAN
OF
· LOWER MERION TOWNSHIP ·

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNA.



· UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP ·

· PHILADELPHIA ·

1892

FOSTER MASON TOWN

FOSTER MASON TOWN



more than one per cent a year and may borrow money for township purposes.¹ If the township is involved in legal difficulties it is represented in court by these commissioners. They also grant franchises and make laws called ordinances which all the townspeople are obliged to observe or be liable to punishment by fine or imprisonment. These commissioners are elected by the voters on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November in odd years. They are divided among the election districts, one or more of these districts choosing one commissioner to look after its interests.

Election districts are small sections into which a township is divided by the County Court of Quarter Sessions. These sections must be of "compact and contiguous territory." By an Act of Assembly in 1917² the election districts of Lower Merion Township were numbered by the Court of Common Pleas of Montgomery County. Commissioners from the odd numbered districts will serve until 1920, and those from the even numbered districts until 1922.³

¹General Laws of Townships, § 355.

²Act 229, § 2, Pennsylvania Laws, 1917.

District Name.	District No.	Name	Address	Popular District Name
Lower	1	James A. Stretch,	Narberth,	General Wayne
Upper	2	W. A. L. Barker,	Gladwyne,	Gladwyne
East Lower	3	William B. Francis,	W. Manayunk,	Pencoyd
East Bryn Mawr	4	Kane S. Green,	Bryn Mawr,	E. Bryn Mawr
North Ardmore ...	5	H. W. Smedley,	Ardmore,	N. Ardmore
Rosemont	6	J. Howard Supplee,	Rosemont,	Rosemont
Haverford	7	John Lewis Evans,	Haverford,	Haverford
South Ardmore ...	8	Wm. G. Frankenfield,	Ardmore,	S. Ardmore
Bala	9	Martin P. Glynn,	Bala,	Bala
West Ardmore	10	W. H. Sherwood,	Ardmore,	W. Ardmore
West Bryn Mawr ..	11	Jos. O. Kerbaugh,	Bryn Mawr,	W. Bryn Mawr
Merion	12	Henry Delaplaine,	Merion,	Merion
Cynwyd	13	Joseph J. Skelton, Jr.	Cynwyd,	Cynwyd

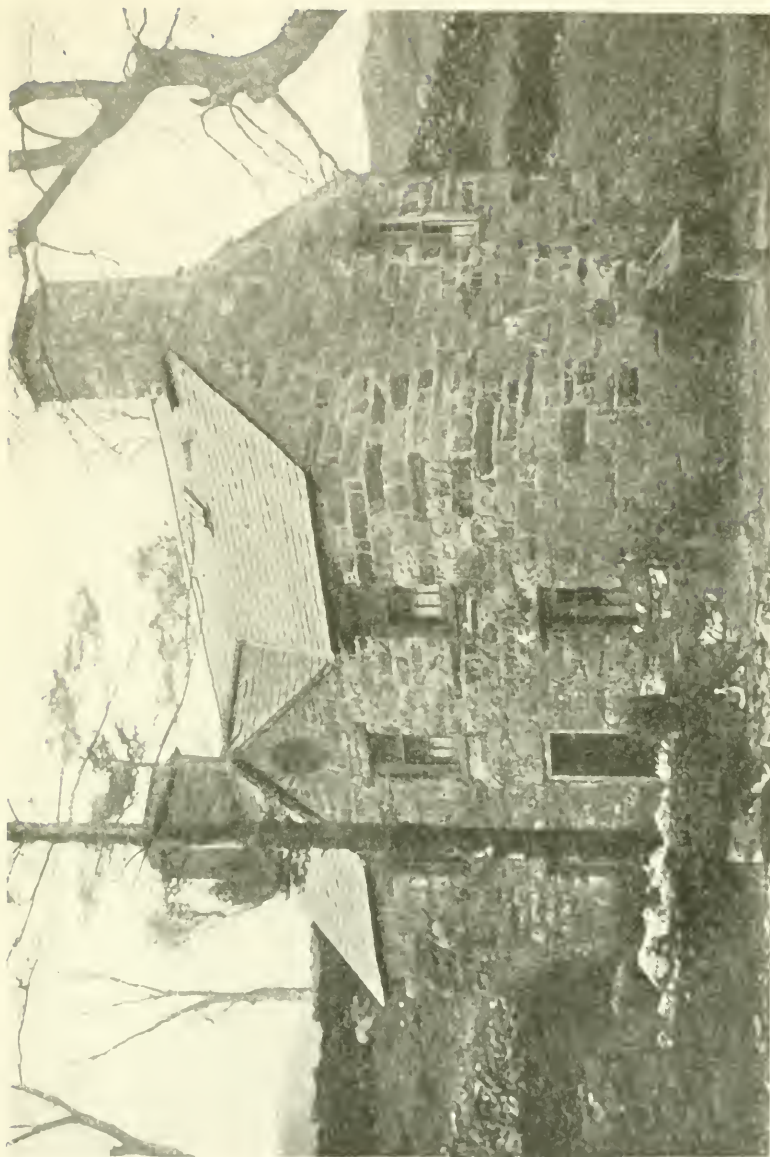
Each township commissioner serves for four years and receives a nominal salary of \$60 a year, a proportionate amount of which is to be deducted for "each and every regular meeting" of the board which a commissioner fails to attend.¹

Funds are needed to carry on the township government. These are obtained by means of taxation. Every one who owns property in the township must help to pay the township expenses, and the township's share of the county expenses. But before any property can be taxed a value must be set upon it and this valuation of all the taxable property in the township takes place once in three years. An official called the township assessor is elected to make this valuation and to draw up a list of all who should pay taxes. The assessor is elected for a term of four years by the qualified voters at the regular municipal election. The assessor and assistant assessors are paid according to the number of days they are employed upon the duties of their office.² Any one who objects to his assessment may petition the Court of Quarter Sessions of the County.³ Besides placing a value upon taxable property the assessor prepares every year a list of all the people in the township who are qualified to vote and reports all births and deaths during the

¹Act of June 1, 1915. Pennsylvania Laws, 684. General Laws of Townships, § 597.

²General Laws of Townships, § 402, 403, 404, 405.

³Ibid., § 413.



Near Dolgelly. Built by Rees Lewis. The Birthplace of Rowland Ellis, 1650.
Bryn Mawr.
(Courtesy of H. Parker Rolfe, Photographer)

year to the clerk of the Orphans' Court (a county court).¹

After all taxable property has been valued the taxes must be collected, and by an act of the State Legislature of May, 1907, the township treasurer was made responsible for the collection of taxes.² This official is elected by the voters for a term of four years, and is obliged to give a bond with one or more sureties for the faithful performance of his duties as treasurer.³ He is required by law to send a notice to every taxable person, of the valuation of his property, the rate of taxation, the full amount of taxes for which he is liable, the place where and the times when the tax is payable, the limit of time of payment, together with a statement of the amount to be remitted if paid promptly and the penalty for delayed payment. The law requires that these notices be sent to the last known post office address of the taxpayer.

There is an act of April 15, 1834, apparently still in force that nothing in the law authorizes "the arrest or imprisonment for non-payment of any tax of any female or infant or person of unsound mind."⁴ The township treasurer receives as compensation for his services a sum equal to two per cent. of all taxes received or collected by him and in addition one per cent. on all sewer rents. This rate is fixed by ordinance of the township commissioners. The township

¹Maltby, v. 65.

²General Laws of Townships, § 367.

³Ibid., § 425.

⁴General Laws of Townships, § 419.

tax rate was changed in 1919 from $8\frac{1}{2}$ mills to 10 mills on the dollar.

You will readily see that we should have some one to look over the accounts of all the township officers, to find out if the funds are properly collected and expended. So three men are elected as auditors for a term of four years, to audit all the township accounts.¹ The auditors are obliged by law to file within ten days after the audit is completed a copy of the accounts with the township secretary, and another with the clerk of the Court of Quarter Sessions of the County.² The auditors also post statements of the account for everybody to read. If you are a taxpayer, and you object, for any reason, to the auditor's report, you may appeal to the County Court of Common Pleas.

The secretary of the Board of Township Commissioners keeps the official minutes of the Board, and the minute book and other records and documents of the township must be open to the inspection of any taxpayer.³

To keep order in our township a chief of police is elected by a majority vote of the Board of Township Commissioners. His term of service begins on the first of February and lasts for one year. He and his patrolmen are under the supervision of a standing committee of the Board of Commissioners, called the Police Committee, which has power to suspend any

¹Ibid., § 600.

²Maltby, p. 66.

³General Laws of Townships, § 563.

of the police officers, but must report any suspension immediately to the commissioners for their approval or disapproval.¹

The State law provides that we may elect two justices of the peace to serve for a term of six years. These may consider both criminal and civil cases and may impanel juries of six men. Civil cases involving not more than \$300 may be tried by a justice of the peace. In all cases involving more than \$5.33, his decision "is subject to the right of appeal to the higher courts."² The justice of the peace may issue warrants for the arrest of those who are charged with any crime, and may impose a fine or term in jail for minor offenses. In the case of serious crimes the offender is bound over to the county courts for trial. Other duties of the justice of the peace are to administer oaths, perform marriages, issue search warrants and witness signatures to legal documents. His compensation consists of fees.³

We know that a town is good to live in, just so far as its residents are good citizens. The men who have made the laws for our State knew that in order to have good citizens, all the boys and girls living in the State must have free and equal opportunities for an education. So they made a law which compels every city and borough and township in the State of Pennsylvania to provide schools and teachers and textbooks for all those between six and twenty-one

¹By-Laws of Lower Merion Township Commission.

²Maltby, p. 71.

³Ibid., pp. 71, 72.

years of age who want to go to school.¹ Every township is a school district having the same boundaries as the township. Because these districts vary in the number of people living in them they are divided into four classes. Those districts which contain 500,000 or more inhabitants are called districts of the first class. If they have less than 500,000, but more than 30,000, inhabitants they are districts of the second class.

Lower Merion has less than 30,000 but more than 5000 inhabitants so it is a school district of the third class. In all these school districts certain people, men or women, are chosen to be school directors. In districts of the first class, fifteen directors are chosen. Nine are chosen in districts of the second class. Since Lower Merion is a district of the third class it has seven school directors. These are chosen at the regular election in November by all the voters of the township. They serve on the Board of Education for six years, beginning with the first Monday in December following their election. Not all of the six have been chosen in any one year, so that their terms of office do not end at the same time. Any man or woman, of good moral character, who is twenty-one years of age or over, and who has been a resident of Lower Merion Township for at least one year previous to the date of his election, may be chosen school director.²

¹Constitution of 1873, State of Pennsylvania, Article X, § 1; School Code, Edition 1915, Article IV, § 401, p. 26.

²State Constitution, 1873. Article X, § 3; School Code, Article II, § 204.

But no one may be a school director who is employed at the same time by the township in any other township office.¹ All of our public school property, which is valued at over one million dollars,² is in charge of our Board of Education. The members of this Board also appoint or dismiss and fix the salaries of all the teachers, the principals and the school superintendent. They fix the length of the school term, beyond the eight months required by the State law; they choose the textbooks used in the schools and approve the course of study.

To meet the expense of carrying on our schools a school tax upon real estate and personal property is levied by our Board of Education every year during the month of April or May. This tax may not in any one year be more than twenty-five mills on the dollar of the assessed valuation of all taxable property, and it is assessed upon all the property on which county taxes are levied.³ The school tax in Lower Merion for the year ending July 2, 1918, was eight mills on the dollar, and amounted to \$209,055.36.⁴ The cost of each grade school pupil was \$9.97 per month; of each

¹School Code, Article II, § 207.

The members of the Board are:

Dr. William C. Powell, Bryn Mawr. Term expires 1924.

Mr. William L. Austin, Rosemont. Term expires 1920.

Mr. William J. Byrnes, Jr., Ardmore. Term expires 1924.

Mr. J. Harmon Wilson, Cynwyd. Term expires 1921.

Mr. William J. Clark, Ardmore. Term expires 1921.

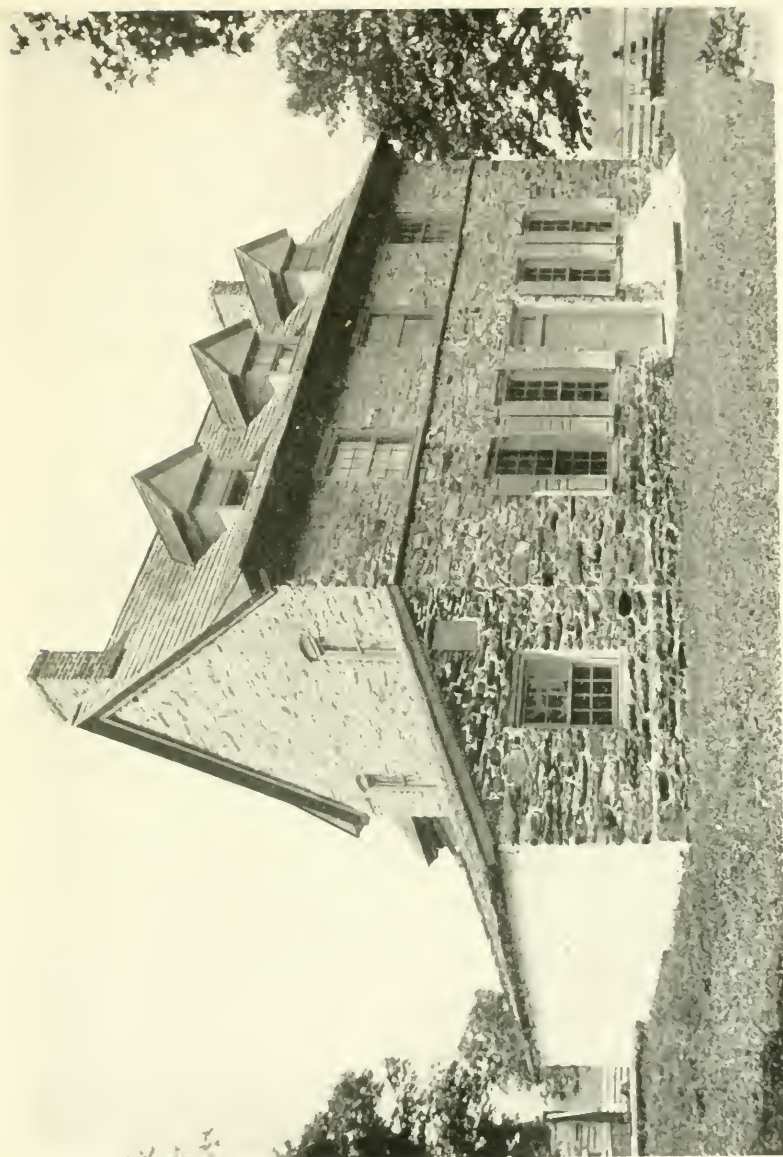
Mr. Richard J. Hamilton, Ardmore. Term expires 1924.

Mr. Thomas C. Yocum, Cynwyd. Term expires 1921.

²\$1,077,556.73. Directory Lower Merion Township Public Schools, 1917-1918, p. 31.

³School Code, Article V, § 537, 540.

⁴School Directory, Lower Merion Township Public Schools, 1918-1919.



Harriton (Bryn Mawr).
Built by Rowland Ellis. Afterward the Residence of Charles Thomson,
Secretary of the Continental Congress.
(Courtesy of H. Parker Rolfe, Photographer)

High School pupil was \$12.45 per month. For the year ending July 2, 1919, the school tax was raised to 10 mills on the dollar and amounted to \$265,083.90. The cost of each pupil for the year ending July 2, 1919, was as follows: Grade school, \$6.27 per month; High School, \$13.56 per month.¹ There is also in every school district of the second, third and fourth classes in Pennsylvania a tax called the occupation tax, of at least one dollar, which is assessed for school purposes upon every male resident who is twenty-one years of age or over.² All the school taxes are collected by a tax collector, who is appointed by the Board of Education at a salary (for 1918-1919) of \$2500.³

In order that we may know that these school funds are carefully collected and expended two men are appointed every year in the month of May by the County Court of Common Pleas to act as school auditors. They must "carefully inspect every school order issued for the payment of money by the Board of Education and the accounts of the school treasurer and any other official in the school district whose accounts are to be audited."⁴

We have said that the State laws direct that schools must be provided for all persons between the

¹The amount is obtained by dividing the total expenses by the number of pupils. The total expenses include salaries, transportation, text books, heat, light, insurance, supplies—everything except new buildings and new equipment.

²School Code, Article V, § 542, 543.

³School Directory, Lower Merion Township Public Schools, 1917-1918, p. 32.

⁴School Code, Article XXVI, § 2613.

ages of six and twenty-one years who want to go to school. On the other hand, all children who are eight years old must go to school until they are sixteen, unless they are excused by the Board of Education for some "urgent" reason or some mental or physical disability, or unless they are fourteen years old and have secured what is called an employment certificate to permit them to go to work.¹ No one may allow a child between the age of eight and fourteen to work during school hours. Any one who does so is liable to a fine or imprisonment.² Every mother, father or guardian who fails to send a child to school must pay a fine.³ To see that all children of school age are attending school the school directors appoint attendance officers. These officers may arrest any child who fails to attend school, or any child who is incorrigible or disorderly during school hours or on his way to and from school.⁴

In Lower Merion school district there are children 14 years of age or over who would like to go to school, but are obliged to work in the daytime. For these the Board of Education will provide a free evening school if the parents of twenty-five or more pupils above the age of fourteen apply for it, and if an average attendance of at least fifteen pupils can be maintained.⁵ An evening manual training school will

¹Ibid., Article XIV, § 1414, 1415, 1416.

²Ibid., Article XIV, § 1422.

³Ibid., Article XIV, § 1423.

⁴Ibid., Article XIV, § 1432.

⁵Ibid., Article XIX, § 1901.

be established and equipped for pupils above the age of fourteen years, if seventy-five or more taxpayers of the district request such a school and at least twenty-five pupils apply for admission and keep up an average attendance of fifteen.¹ The State law also provides that the Board of Education of any school district may establish a kindergarten or assist any kindergarten that has been established under any non-sectarian association.² "Instead of establishing or maintaining a separate public library the Board of Education may by a two-thirds vote join with or aid any individual or association in the maintenance . . . of a free public non-sectarian library."³ In order that the property which the citizens have invested in their public schools may be used to serve the interests of the community, the State law-makers have given permission to any Board of Education to allow its school grounds and buildings to be used "for social, recreation and other proper purposes," under regulations which the local board may adopt, and to make arrangements "with any association or individual for the temporary use of school property for schools, playgrounds, social, recreation, or other proper educational purposes."⁴

If our town is to be a good town to live in, the people living in it must be in good health. You would not want to live in a place where there were many

¹Ibid., Article XIX, § 1902.

²Ibid., Article XIX, § 1904.

³Ibid., Article XXV, § 2510.

⁴Ibid., Article VI, § 627.

sick people. What is being done, here in this town, to keep the standard of health high? Our township commissioners do their part in making ordinances to do away with whatever may be harmful to public health. The township has connection with the Philadelphia sewage system. Garbage is collected at the expense of the township by order of the township commissioners. Three years ago the legislature of the State passed a law requiring every township or borough of the first class to maintain a Board of Health of five members, at least one of whom should be a reputable physician of not less than two years of medical practice.¹ In our town these men are appointed by the president of the Township Commission to serve on the Board of Health for five years. The members of the board serve without any compensation. They choose their own president and appoint a secretary who may or may not be one of their number. They appoint a health officer who must not be one of the board members. The secretary and the health officer serve for one year and receive whatever salary is determined by the Board of Health and ratified by the township commissioners. The president of our Board of Health is Dr. B. K. Wilbur, of Bryn Mawr.²

The secretary of the Board of Health is George

¹General Laws of Townships, § 642, § 643.

²The other members are:

Andrew Macdonald, Ardmore.

William P. Landis, Ardmore.

Dr. Alexander R. Evans, Gladwyne.

Edward B. Jarden, Cynwyd.

C. Anderson, of Ardmore. The health officer is Marvin E. Reynolds, of Ardmore. Formerly the health officer was also the superintendent of health and drainage, and there was a deputy health officer to assist the chief health officer. Now the engineer in charge of the Department of Plumbing and Sewers, Hartman K. Calvert, also performs the duties of deputy health officer.

Our Board of Health not only enforces the regulations of the State Board of Health but it has the power to make other health regulations, which are made obligatory upon every resident by an ordinance of our Board of Township Commissioners. Such an ordinance was passed in 1915 and the rules and regulations are described in a pamphlet issued by the township commissioners, which you may obtain by applying to the secretary, G. C. Anderson, Ardmore, or to any member of the Board of Health. These rules especially provide that all the streets and roads must be kept clean; that no refuse or garbage of any sort may be allowed upon them nor waste water of any sort allowed to drain upon them.¹ All plans and specifications for drainage must be filed with the Board of Health, and when the work is done it must be examined and approved by the health officer.² No water closets may be placed in an unventilated room or apartment. No privy vaults or cesspools may be

¹Rules and Regulations of the Board of Health of Lower Merion Township, 1915, pp 3, 9.

²Ibid., pp. 34, 35.

built within twenty feet of buildings used for residence, and all must be water tight and so constructed as to be easily cleaned.¹ No one is allowed to keep a pig pen within the township except by permission of the Board of Health. All stables must be kept in a sanitary condition, satisfactory to this board. No one is permitted to burn any substance within the limits of the township which shall emit any obnoxious odor.²

There are upwards of thirty communicable diseases which must be reported to the Board of Health. Those afflicted with certain of these diseases must be kept under quarantine and a warning of this quarantine must be posted upon their place of residence.³ Moreover, all teachers of public or private schools and of Sunday schools are obliged to send home any children or other persons who come to the school having any unusual rash or skin eruption or who complain of soreness of the throat or have symptoms of whooping cough or of any eye disease and they must report this fact to the health officer. No one who has been ill and under quarantine may return to school except with a certificate duly signed and stating that the quarantine and disinfecting regulations have been complied with.⁴

Any one who defaces, covers up or removes any placard posted by the Board of Health to notify

¹Ibid., pp. 8, 9.

²Ibid., p. 10.

³Ibid., pp. 46, 47.

⁴Ibid., pp. 52, 53.

the public of the existence of any of these diseases, or who fails to comply with any of these regulations, is liable to fine or imprisonment.¹ Every loyal resident will co-operate with our Board of Health in observing these regulations even where they entail temporary inconvenience or discomfort.

Every pupil of the public schools is examined once a year for vision, hearing and breathing. The teeth, tonsils, cervical glands, head and skin are inspected and examination is made for tuberculosis, nervous diseases and malnutrition. If a child is in need of care, the medical inspector gives instructions to the teacher, and the teacher must carry out the instructions during the year and give a copy of the instructions to the parents or guardian of the child. Each school keeps a record of each child's inspection with a copy of the note sent to the parent notifying him of any defect, together with a statement as to whether treatment was given and an opinion of the result.

The Bryn Mawr schools have no school nurse to carry out the recommendations and instructions of this medical inspector where the parents cannot or will not do so. In some cases the district nurse employed by the Main Line Citizens' Association has been called upon by the school inspector.

To protect children the State law forbids any one to distribute upon the streets or the premises of houses any samples of medicine, ink, or coloring or

¹Ibid., p. 58.

polishing compounds. Any one convicted of this offense may be brought before any justice of the peace, and fined \$20 or imprisoned for twenty days.¹ Moreover, "all persons are forbidden to sell, give or furnish tobacco in any form to a child under sixteen." This offense is "punishable by a fine of \$100 and imprisonment in the county jail for thirty days."² To sell or to give any cigarette or cigarette paper to a minor is punishable by a fine of not less than \$100.³

Two sources of disease which every community must watch are the water supply and the milk supply. If these are kept pure it is likely that a high standard of health may be maintained. A few years ago the death rate from typhoid fever, due to impurities in the water, was higher in Bryn Mawr than in Philadelphia. An investigation was made, many sources of pollution of the water were found and the water company was obliged to remedy its supply. The water now comes from two neighboring creeks, Crum Creek and Pickering Creek. It is chemically treated and is reasonably free from impurities.

The milk that supplies Bryn Mawr comes from local dairies, from each of which the Board of Health takes a sample once a month. This sample is examined by an expert chemist, Dr. David W. Horn, of Bryn Mawr. Visible dirt in the milk means that the milk contains eight times as much invisible dirt or bacteria. Every milk dealer has to secure a license

¹Act of May, 1901, P. L. III, p. 7. Bonsall's Social Laws of Penna.

²Act of July, 1901, P. L. 638, p. 6. Ibid.

³Act of May 7, 1913, P. L. 198, p. 6. Ibid.

from the Board of Health. Skim milk must be plainly labeled. The misbranding of milk as "Baby Milk," "Pasteurized Milk," etc., which does not meet the requirements of the Board of Health regarding such milk is punishable by a fine. The sale of mixed milk, milk from quarantined premises or from diseased cows is absolutely forbidden. It is also against the law to sell milk to which has been added any preservative or any adulterant such as ice or water. Any person doing so is subject to a fine of not more than \$25 for the first offense and \$50 for every subsequent offense.¹

Dairies are inspected by both State and local officials, and there are specific regulations as to the cleanliness and care of stables, prevention of contamination in bottling, storing and sealing of milk and milk cans, sterilizing of bottles and the use of corks.² The Board of Health uses the dairy score card of the United States Government to record all these points and a score of from sixty to eighty points is required. In addition to what the Board of Health does there are certain things which the individual may do:

1. Never buy milk except from a licensed dealer.
2. Never buy or obtain milk from quarantined premises.
3. Watch for visible dirt, complain to the milk man, then take a sample of the milk to Dr. Horn, or to a member of the Board of Health.

¹Rules and Regulations of Board of Health of Lower Merion Township, p. 19.

²Ibid., p. 25.

4. Keep the milk always in a cool place, preferably in a refrigerator.
5. Do not use a metallic or permanent cork or stopper in a milk jar or bottle.
6. If there is any uncertainty about the source of the milk or its purity, especially in the summer, pasteurize it by placing it in bottles in a large pan of water over a burner, having enough water in the pan to come up to the neck of the bottle. Keep the water just below the boiling point for thirty minutes. This process renders any bacteria in the milk harmless and does not make the milk any the less palatable or easily digested as does the process of sterilization by bringing the milk to the boiling point.

The adulteration of food or the selling of adulterated food is expressly forbidden.¹ The meats and refrigerators of the local markets and provision stores are inspected by a State inspector at unstated intervals, generally about every two months. The meat has already been inspected before and after killing and is officially stamped, as is all cold storage food. The State inspector looks at these stamps and examines the ice chests and fat cans to see that the trimmings contain a proper amount of suet, the absence of which would indicate that inferior animals had been used. The local Board of Health requires that "all fish, fowl and meats exposed for sale shall be screened from flies," that "no decaying vegetables, fruits, fish, shell-fish, game, poultry, eggs or meat or

¹Ibid, p. 31.

any food substance that is unfit for human food shall be sold or exposed for sale.”¹ The local Board of Health makes no regular inspection of markets, bakeries, or groceries. Every housekeeper should visit the stores where her supplies are purchased. If the owner refuses to make any needful arrangements for insuring the purity of his supplies, or to remedy any complaints brought against him, the case should be taken to the Board of Health. If any suspicious looking foreign matter is found on any food, particularly that which is to be eaten raw, it should be taken to Dr. Horn for chemical analysis.

So far we have been talking about the way in which our town is governed, but if a town is to be healthy and happy there is a great deal which cannot be done by the elected officials of the town. It is necessary for the citizens of the town to aid the officials. The citizens of every town, old and young, want a chance to play and a place to be amused. The children of every town need a playground, and young people need a place to hold club meetings; the boys and girls need a gymnasium; the older people need rooms for recreation, and everybody needs a library.

Then, too, the citizens of every town want that town to be beautiful as well as clean. The Township Commissioners cannot spend the taxes for things which the citizens do not want, and so the citizens must come together and decide what they want, and often the citizens must pay for some of these things,

¹Ibid., p. 30.

such as signs on our streets, and a public park, and wider roads, and then, finally, the Government will decide that if the citizens are so anxious to have these things it is right to spend the taxes for them.

Every town needs a hospital. It has to care for its sick and its aged, and its children who have no homes, and the people who are out of work, or the families that are in trouble, and so the citizens of the town form private organizations to do all these things.

In our town of Bryn Mawr the organizations which do most of these things are the Main Line Citizens' Association, the Social Service Department of the Federation of Churches, the Bryn Mawr Community Center, the Bryn Mawr Hospital and the Red Cross Home Service.

To take care of our residents while they are ill and to make them well as soon as possible the Bryn Mawr Hospital was established nearly twenty-five years ago. This is a private hospital with a free ward of twelve to sixteen beds for men, the same number for women and about ten for children. There are also semi-private beds at moderate rates. The hospital receives patients from within a radius of thirty to fifty miles around Bryn Mawr. Over one thousand patients were cared for in the hospital during the past year. A free dispensary for medical and surgical cases is open every day between twelve and one o'clock, with free prescriptions where necessary, and a nominal payment of twenty-five cents for each

treatment. Three thousand seven hundred and twenty-six patients were treated in the dispensary in the year 1919-1920. The hospital social service secretary and her assistant visit the families of patients where it seems advisable, and give relief, if necessary.

The hospital also maintains an eye dispensary, which is open on Mondays and Fridays at two o'clock; a dental dispensary, which is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from two to five, and on Saturdays from nine to twelve; and a nose and throat dispensary, which is open on Wednesdays at two o'clock.

The Main Line Citizens' Association provides two district nurses. These nurses take any case that is reported, either through the hospital, the social service secretaries, the doctors, or other individuals. They do not work entirely with charity patients but are often employed for a day or part of a day in families where some temporary assistance is needed. The infant mortality in Bryn Mawr in recent years has been greater than in Philadelphia, Boston or New York. Because of this, particular attention has been given by the nurses to infant hygiene and pre-natal care in the many families which have neither the means nor the facilities to provide that care and attention which is essential to the welfare of their children. That which secures the welfare of the children secures also the welfare of the whole town, for no town can prosper long unless all its people, young and old, have sound minds and sound bodies.

Twenty-five years ago the Bryn Mawr Citizens' Association was organized, and in 1909 it came to be known as the Main Line Citizens' Association. It has about eight hundred members, and these members carry on their work for civic improvement through committees. It has a Committee on Roads and Automobiles, which tries to have the roads improved, and has arranged for the placing of new road signs which shall be beautiful as well as useful. It has a Home Garden Committee, which offers prizes for the best kept yards and gardens, and so tries to have our town beautiful. It has a Committee on Vacant Lot Gardens, which obtains the loan of large vacant lots and assigns gardens to anybody who will work them. It has a Committee on Parks and Playgrounds, which maintains the public park near the Pennsylvania Station and has done a great deal to develop the playground of Bryn Mawr. It has a Committee on Village Improvement, which has had Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted, of Boston, one of the most expert men on village improvement, come to Bryn Mawr and tell us how we can make our town more beautiful, and it is now proposing to the Township Commissioners what is known as a housing code by which every new house which is built in Lower Merion Township shall be safe from fire and have good plumbing, light and air, and shall help to make the town more beautiful.

Because disaster comes to our town now and then and because sometimes citizens of our town may

be ill or out of work, or some of our children may be left with no one to care for them, ten of our churches and our civic and relief organizations banded together in the year 1911 to form a society. This organization is known as the Social Service Department of the Federation of Churches. It is managed by a Board of Representatives from these various organizations, and it has a secretary whose duty it is to give friendly advice to the members of the community who live between Overbrook and Villa Nova. If a person has been at the hospital and needs convalescent care, if it is necessary to arrange for the care of aged persons, if children are without homes or need special protection, this secretary, with her voluntary assistants, is ready to serve as a friend in need. Thus, in the year 1919, two hundred and sixty-six families were aided by this organization.

Working closely with the Federation of Churches and sharing its office in the Milestone is the Red Cross Home Service. When so many of our men were ready to give their lives for the cause of the war, these soldiers and sailors often left families who needed advice and assistance, and everyone knows what a friend the Red Cross Home Service was and still is to the men of our army and to their families. Anyone can imagine the questions which came up and were very hard for any family to answer during the war because husbands or fathers or sons or brothers were fighting in France.

In 1916 the people of Bryn Mawr decided that

they wanted a social center, and so representatives from all of the different organizations of the town, including those which we have just mentioned and the churches and business men's club, the business women's club, and a great many other groups, formed a committee of sixty citizens and organized the Bryn Mawr Community Center. An Executive Committee was chosen and it immediately secured from the School Board the use of the wing back of the old schoolhouse on the Pike and two adjacent rooms of the school building. During these three years the Bryn Mawr Community Center has grown from a very small organization to a very large one. It now occupies not only the rooms at the rear of the schoolhouse, but it maintains the social center at the Milestone, and it has joined with the citizens of Haverford and with them directs all of the activities at the Preston Center on Preston Avenue in what used to be known as the Preston Reading Room.

In 1918, the people of our town who had built up the Bryn Mawr Community Center rented the oldest house on the Lancaster Turnpike in Bryn Mawr for a social center for the town and called it the Milestone, because in front of it was one of the oldest milestones of the town. It was soon decided that it would be a good thing for all these organizations to have their offices in this social center, and so the Main Line Citizens' Association, the Federation of Churches, the Home Service of the Red Cross,

now are all together at the Milestone with the Community Center.

The little children from the Bryn Mawr School have lunches served to them by the Community Center; the children of our town under six years of age now go to school at the kindergarten of the Center. The older children have a playground, which is carried on by the Center at the school building after three o'clock. The boys and girls of the town have a great many clubs which hold their meetings at the schoolhouse or the Milestone, under the direction of the Center. If our children, our boys and girls, our young men and young women, or our citizens, wish to attend gymnasium classes or to hold athletic games, or to learn carpentry, or dressmaking, or French, or if they wish to attend lectures or concerts, they go to the Center. Through the Center the town has built up a public library with almost a thousand members and over two thousand books. Five hundred dollars is now given by the School Directors toward its support.

The Center maintains a night school in which men are able to learn English and other branches, and it provides for co-operation in social and civic movements all along the Main Line.

Anyone over sixteen years of age may become a member of the Bryn Mawr Community Center Association and have a vote with regard to all of its business by paying at least \$1.00 membership dues.

This story of **Our Town and How We Are Governed** has been prepared under the direction of the Bryn Mawr Community Center, so that everybody in the town may know all about the way in which the town governs itself and what it tries to do to make its town more beautiful and its people healthier, happier and more intelligent.







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